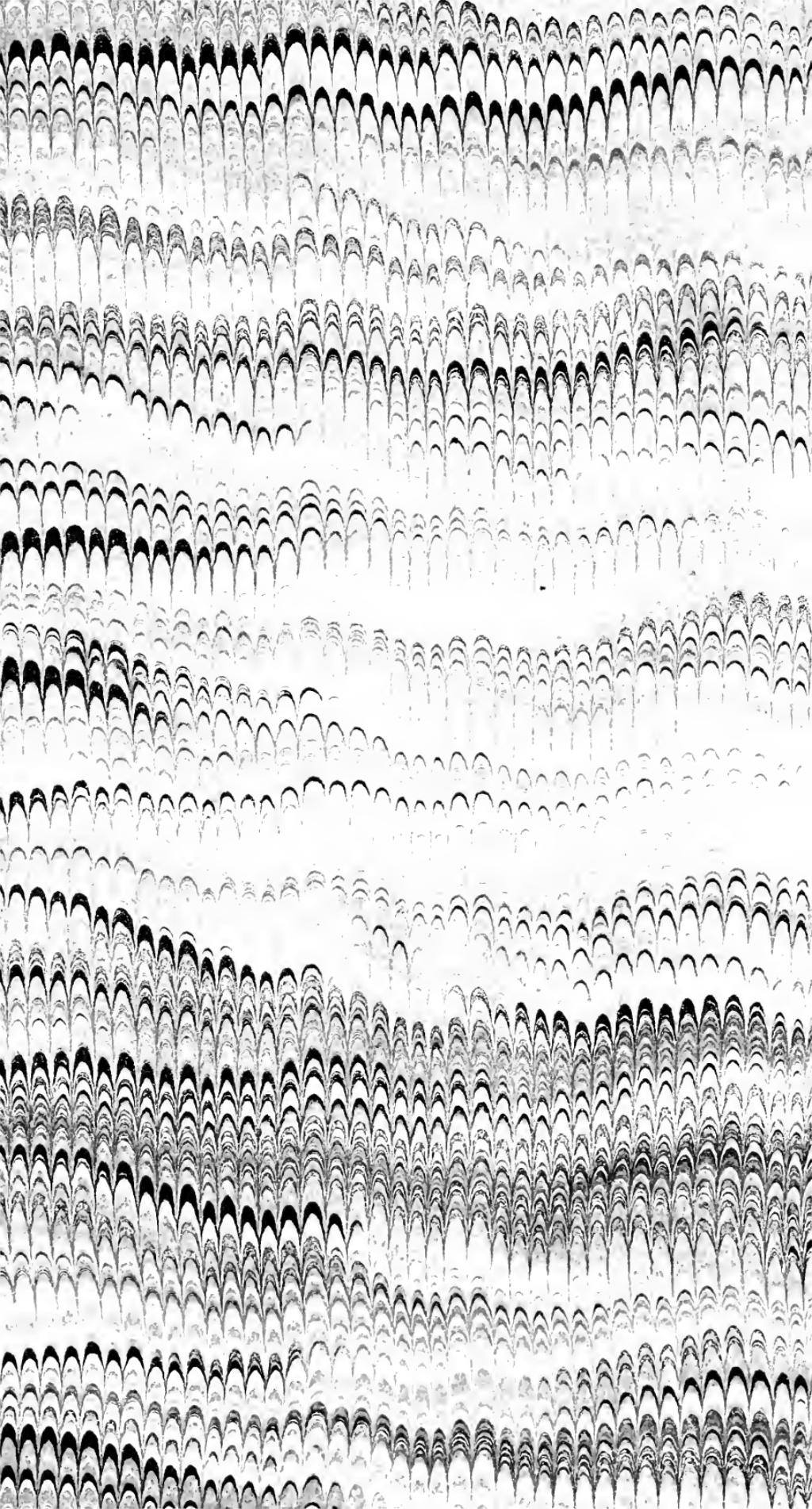


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LIFE AND CHARACTER

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OF

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WILLIAM PENN.

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LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

WILLIAM PENN.

THE following sketch of the life and labours of that eminent Christian minister and statesman, WILLIAM PENN, is principally compiled from his biography, in the 5th volume of the Friends' Library. It is published with the hope that the fervent piety, consistent walking, and sound principles of this faithful man, may induce the readers of these pages not only to seek a further acquaintance with his valuable writings, but also awaken desires in them to follow him as he followed Christ.

WILLIAM PENN was born in London, in 1644. He was the son of Sir William Penn, an admiral in the British navy.

Of his early life but few particulars are recorded. When quite young he was placed at school in the country, where, before he was twelve years of age, his mind was the subject of religious impressions; although at the time he was ignorant of their source, he was afterwards made sensible that it was the Lord's Holy Spirit that had thus early visited him.

After attaining his twelfth year, he returned to London, where he prosecuted his studies, under the direction of a private tutor, for about three years. During this period his mind was often drawn into seriousness; and although his quick and lively disposition, and the many temptations to which he was exposed, sometimes led him astray, yet he was mercifully preserved from many of the snares into which the young and inexperienced too often fall.

When about fifteen years old, he was sent to Oxford to complete his education. Here he pursued his studies with great diligence and success; but his tender mind was much shocked at the dissipation and wickedness which prevailed among the students, and by obedience to the secret checks and limitations of the Holy Spirit, he was preserved from participating in the gross corruptions around him.

Soon after he entered college, he attended a religious meeting appointed by Thomas Loe, who had once been a student at Oxford, but who was then a minister among the people called Quakers. Under the living and powerful ministry of this Friend, William Penn's spiritual condition was effectually reached: the witness for God in his own heart owning and answering the testimony. The impressions which had been early made being thus renewed and strengthened, fresh desires after holiness were begotten in his soul. In this seeking frame of mind, he was led to perceive the emptiness and formality which prevailed among the professors of religion; and finding some of his fellow students of similar views, they withdrew from the established worship of the University, and held religious meetings among themselves. This greatly offended the heads of the University, who fined them for non-conformity. William Penn, however, believing his principles and practices were founded in truth, and essential to his peace of mind, could not abandon them; and as his determination was unalterable, he was finally expelled from the college.

He then returned home, where the gravity of his deportment, and correct conduct, indicated that the good work so early begun in him, was gradually going forward. He refrained from associating with the fashionable world, or mingling in its vain amusements, but took great delight in the company of the most grave and sober persons. His father, who had great influence at court, and ambitious prospects for his son, viewed this conduct with great disapprobation. He saw, that if persisted in, his fondest hopes must be blighted, and therefore endeavoured by argument and entreaty, to induce his son to abandon his self-denying life, and enter upon the brilliant career which was now open before him.

William Penn's thirst, however, was not for earthly glory, but heavenly; "he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;" and though it grieved him to disobey his earthly parent, he felt that it would be far worse to resist the will of his Father in heaven. The admiral, finding all his entreaties unavailing, at length resorted to blows, with no better success, and finally expelled William from the house. He did not long remain in exile. Soon after his

return home, his father concluded that he should visit France, in the hope that intercourse with gay and fashionable society would weaken and wear off his religious convictions. William Penn accordingly accompanied some persons of quality to Paris, where he resided a considerable time; and although his father's purpose was not entirely accomplished, yet his residence there was certainly marked by a greater advancement in fashionable accomplishments than in religious stability.

After leaving Paris, he resided for some time at Saumur, where he resumed his studies, and acquired an accurate knowledge of the French language. In 1664 he returned to England, after an absence of about two years. He was received with great pleasure, for his polished and courtly bearing led his father to anticipate the speedy realization of his hopes. And rarely indeed have a father's hopes been placed upon a more promising son; for at this time, beside many rich and powerful friends, he possessed a manly form, blooming with health, a lively and active disposition, a ready wit, and talents improved by great literary and scientific attainments. The admiral, however, soon perceived that his ambitious prospects for his son were to be disappointed. The Lord had better things in store for him, even the things that accompany salvation; and soon after his return from the continent, the visitations of the Holy Spirit to his soul were renewed, the glories of this world were stained in his view, and all its pleasant pictures spoiled. In referring to this period of his life, he says: "Now was all the glory of this world as a bubble; yea nothing was dear to me that I might win Christ; for the love, pleasure, and friendship of this world were a burden to my soul. In this seeking state, I was directed to the testimony of Jesus in my own conscience, as the true shining light, given me to discern the thoughts and intents of my own heart. And no sooner was I turned unto it but I found it to be that which from my childhood had visited me, though I distinctly knew it not."

Returning from some naval service in which he had been engaged, the admiral found his son wholly divested of that gaiety of manners which he had contracted in France; and the prospect of his becoming a man of the world, fitted to shine among courtiers and statesmen, was more distant than ever. His father, to try the effect of

employment, sent him to Ireland to take charge of his estate in the neighbourhood of Cork. Previously to 1666, William Penn appears to have had little, if any, intercourse with the Society of Friends; but in the course of this year, being in Cork, and hearing that Thomas Loe was to be at a meeting there, he resolved to attend it. Thomas began his testimony with these words, "There is a faith which overcomes the world, and there is a faith which is overcome by the world." On this text he enlarged with great power and effect. William Penn's heart was well prepared to receive the word preached. He was fully convinced, and from this time became a diligent attender of the meetings of Friends, and one with them in religious profession.

In 1667, while attending a religious meeting in Cork, he, with others, was arrested and taken before the mayor, who would have released him, on his giving security for his good behaviour: this he refused to do, and was, in consequence, committed to prison with his companions. He remained there, however, but a short time, being released at the instance of the Earl of Orrery. This imprisonment made William Penn's religious profession extensively known, and exposed him to much derision: few persons being able to appreciate the motives which could induce a young man of twenty-three, the only son of a Vice-Admiral of England, to relinquish his brilliant prospects of worldly preferment, to become a humble disciple of a meek and crucified Saviour. Information of the course his son was pursuing soon reached the admiral, who immediately recalled him from Ireland. The interview which took place on his return was very affecting. His father endeavoured by persuasion to induce him to abandon the style of speaking and acting which he had now adopted, and comply with the prevailing customs and manners of the world; threatening to disinherit him unless he yielded to his wishes. The son, on the other hand, convinced that his duty to God forbade a compliance, entreated that he might not be urged to violate his conscience. The admiral, perceiving that it was in vain to expect to change the general behaviour of his son, attempted to compromise the matter, and offered to tolerate his uncourtly bearing, provided he would promise to appear bare-headed in the presence of the King, the Duke

of York, and himself. William Penn, believing this was a token of reverence due only to the Supreme Being, felt it his duty, humbly, but firmly, to decline any compromise. At this the admiral became so irritated that he once more expelled him from the paternal roof. The conduct of the son was marked, however, by such humility and resignation, that it won upon the natural affection of his father, who soon after received him again into his house.

In referring some years later, in one of his works, to the rigour with which the pride of man exacts the vain compliments and ceremonies of the world, he mentions the following anecdote: "In France I was myself once set upon about eleven o'clock at night, as I was walking to my lodgings, by a person who waylaid me with his naked sword in his hand and demanded satisfaction of me for taking no notice of him, at a time when he civilly saluted me with his hat, though the truth was I saw him not when he did it. Suppose he had killed me, for he made several passes at me, or that I, in my defence, had killed him, when I disarmed him; I ask any man of understanding or conscience, if the whole round of ceremony were worth the life of a man, considering the dignity of his nature, and the importance of his life, with respect to God, his Creator, himself, and the benefit of civil society?"

In 1668, when William Penn was about twenty-four years old, it pleased the Lord to call him into the work of the gospel ministry. As a messenger of the glad tidings of life and salvation he afterward travelled extensively, and his labours were blessed to many; for "according to the grace given him" he taught with that baptizing power which alone can render Christian teaching effectual, and which is promised by the Holy Head of the Church to all his true ministers.*

In the exercise of his gift he had a godly care to minister only "as of the ability which God giveth," 1 Peter, iv. 11, and having endured much "hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," he was well fitted, in that day of persecution and trial, to remember those who were "in

* "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

bonds as bound with them," and to speak a word in season to him that was weary. To the sincere seeker after truth he was a wise instructor, and to young ministers as a father in Christ: so labouring, in the renewed openings of the word of life as to draw the people off "from all their hireling teachers, to Christ their free teacher, who died for them and purchased them with his blood."

The following short extracts are from a letter of kind and faithful counsel, written to a young woman who loved and followed the vain customs and fashions of the world. They evince the exercise of his mind that she might be wise in time and remember "that the friendship of the world is enmity with God."

He commences, "It was a true word spoken by Jesus Christ, to undeceive the careless wanton Jews, among whom he manifested his glorious truth, through that body prepared of God for that very end, that the way which leads to everlasting life and peace is straight and narrow." He continues, "I beg thee as thou wouldest be saved from that unspeakable anguish which is reserved for worldlings, and from whence there is no redemption, to keep thyself from those vanities, follies, and pollutions, which unavoidably bring that miserable state. Alas! how unsuitable is thy life and practice, with those holy women of old, whose time was mostly spent in heavenly retirements, out of that rattle, noise, and conversation thou art in." The letter is thus concluded, "In short, my friend, be advised to be serious, and to ponder that which belongs to thy eternal peace. Retire from the noise and clatter of tempting visibles, to the beholding Him who is invisible, that He may reign in thy soul, God over all, exalted and blessed for ever."

In this year he appeared as an author in his first printed work, entitled "Truth Exalted," a valuable treatise, designed to show forth to the professors of religion the spirituality of the Gospel. He invites them to come unto Christ Jesus the true light, that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, that obeying Him they might no longer walk in darkness, but have the light of life, and experience his precious blood to cleanse from all sin. About this time he visited Thomas Loe, then on the eve of his departure from a world in which he had laboured faithfully to extend the Messiah's peaceful reign. During

this interview, addressing William Penn, he said, "Bear thy cross, and stand faithful to God; then he will give thee an everlasting crown of glory that shall not be taken from thee. There is no other way which shall prosper, than that which the holy men of old walked in. God hath brought immortality to light, and life immortal is felt; this love overcomes my heart. Glory be to his name, for evermore."

In the same year, William Penn was imprisoned on account of one of his publications, which had given offence to some of the clergy, particularly the Bishop of London. He was treated with great severity, the bishop having declared that unless he publicly recanted his opinions, he should die in prison. But William Penn could not be shaken by such a menace. He boldly replied, that his prison should be his grave, before he would retract his opinions, for he owed his conscience to no mortal man. That great and good things were not attained without loss and hardship. That he would weary out the malice of his persecutors by patience, the never-failing companion of those who suffer for Christ's sake. That those who would reap without labour must perish in disappointment; but he reposed on the assurance that a hair of his head would not fall without his heavenly Father's notice.

After a rigorous confinement of some months, he was released, by command of the king, who interposed his authority at the solicitation of the Duke of York, an intimate friend of Admiral Penn.

During his imprisonment he employed himself in writing "No Cross, No Crown," one of the most valuable of his works. It is adapted to all times and all situations in life, setting forth in the most forcible manner, this great truth, that there can be no wearing the *crown*, without first bearing the *cross*.

In 1669, he went again into Ireland to take charge of his father's estate; and during his residence there, was very useful in encouraging his suffering brethren, many of whom were at that time in prison for conscience sake. He appeared before those in authority on their behalf, and at last had the satisfaction of obtaining an order for their release. During this period he published several tracts, Among these was "A Letter to the Young Convinced," to encourage them to attend closely to the teachings of the

blessed spirit of Christ, by which they had been awakened, and which if faithfully followed, would enable them to make their calling and election sure. In 1670, having accomplished his father's business, and rendered a number of signal services to his friends in Ireland, he returned home. The admiral, by this time, had become fully reconciled to him, and opposed neither his religious principles nor his demeanour. In the summer of this year, William Penn was again imprisoned. He was committed to Newgate by the Mayor of London, for preaching to a meeting of Friends held in Grace-church street, near their meeting-house, from which they had been forcibly excluded. For this alleged offence, he, together with William Mead, was soon after tried. This trial was a total mockery of justice, and shows into what lawless proceedings passion and prejudice may lead those who are set "for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well."

They were charged with being present at, and preaching to, a riotous and seditious assembly. The evidence in the case was of the weakest character, and the recorder charged the jury in the absence of the prisoners, and urged their conviction. The jury brought in a verdict, that William Penn was guilty of speaking in Gracious street. This highly exasperated the recorder, who sent them out of court, with directions to bring in a verdict of guilty of speaking to a riotous assembly. The jury returned into court four times with the same verdict, and then after having been kept for two days and two nights without fire or food, brought in a verdict, in both cases, of "not guilty." For this the recorder fined the jurymen forty marks each, and on their refusing to pay, committed them to prison, whither William Penn and William Mead were also sent, notwithstanding the verdict of acquittal entitled them to their liberty. While the trial was in progress, the prisoners, when brought into court, were shamefully treated. Against this abuse, and all the illegal proceedings of the bench, William Penn protested at the time, as he did afterwards more fully in his published account. He and his companion, it appears, were remanded to prison for the non-payment of the arbitrary fine imposed on them by the court; but they were both soon afterwards released, the fine having been paid by the admiral, against the advice of his son.

This celebrated trial was productive of important and beneficial results to the people of England. It awakened public attention to the arbitrary and oppressive proceedings of the courts, in which, under the pretended sanction of law, the most flagrant violations of justice were often practised with impunity. One of the immediate consequences, was the recognition of the freedom and rights of juries, which were established by a solemn judicial decision.

A few days after his release from prison, William Penn met with a fresh trial in the death of his father. The feelings of the latter had undergone a great change in the last years of his life. He no longer had the same relish for the fading honours of the world, that had formerly distinguished him, and he could now appreciate the conduct of his son. Addressing him a few days before his death, he said: "Son William—I am weary of the world! I would not live over my days again if I could command them with a wish; for the snares of life are greater than the fears of death. This troubles me, that I have offended a gracious God. The thought of this has followed me to this day. Oh! have a care of sin! It is that which is the sting both of life and death.—Let nothing in this world tempt you to wrong your conscience. I charge you, do nothing against your conscience; so will you keep peace at home, which will be a feast to you in a day of trouble." At another time he said to him: "Son William, if you and your friends keep to your plain way of preaching, and keep to your plain way of living, you will make an end of the priests to the end of the world."

Near the close of this year, William Penn was imprisoned for preaching the gospel in a meeting of Friends in Wheeler street. He was confined in Newgate for about six months, during which time he was engaged in writing a tract on "Civil Liberty," and some other treatises for the promotion of justice and righteousness in the earth.

After his release he travelled in Holland and Germany; but no particulars of this religious service have been preserved.

In 1672, he married Gulielma Maria Springett, daughter of Sir William Springett. She was a pious young woman, of amiable manners and highly accomplished. After his marriage he settled in Hertfordshire. He soon, however, found himself called abroad in the work of the

ministry, on which account he travelled through Sussex and Surrey. His labours on this journey were to general edification, contributing to strengthen the hands of Friends and silence opposers.

The Society of Friends had now much increased, and many were daily added to it from the different religious societies by which it was surrounded. This awakened opposition, and many abusive books were written, condemning and misrepresenting the principles of the society. During this and the following year William Penn was much engaged in answering and refuting these, and showing that the doctrines of Friends, being those promulgated by Christ and his apostles, were primitive Christianity revived. He also wrote some excellent epistles to Friends who were under suffering in Holland and Germany, exhorting them "to continue in the faith, and testifying that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." He also sent a letter to Friends in Maryland, showing the Christian and scriptural character of their testimony against oaths, by the support of which, they were then subjected to difficulties, by Lord Baltimore. He afterwards published a treatise on the same subject. In 1674 he also wrote a remonstrance to the senate and council of the city of Embden, the Friends of which place had suffered great hardship by banishment, fines, and imprisonment. In this he says, "Have the senate and council of Embden, more Christian authority than the chosen witnesses of our Saviour? If calling fire from heaven, was judged by Him, who was wiser than Solomon, to be an improper means of converting opposers formerly, it shows little modesty in the authorities of this day, to kindle a fire on earth to destroy them now. Conscience is God's throne in man, and the power of it is his prerogative. The day will come, when one act of tenderness in matters of conscience, shall find a better reward than *all* the severity by which men attempt to propagate their persuasions in the world; for one flows from the Saviour, the other from the destroyer of men."

Near the close of 1675, Matthew Hyde, a conspicuous opposer of Friends, and who had denied the Christian doctrine of the universality and efficacy of divine grace, was taken dangerously ill. On his death-bed, he sent for a few Friends, and in the presence of his wife, expressed to them

his sincere repentance, and desire to be forgiven by God. This circumstance gave occasion to William Penn to publish a tract called "Saul smitten to the ground," in which he gave a narrative of the case, accompanied with some earnest exhortations to trust in that divine power, which had wrought conviction in this opposer.

In 1676, William Penn became concerned as trustee in the management and settlement of West Jersey. As most of his associates were Friends, the province was settled in accordance with their mild and pacific principles, without bloodshed, or any serious difficulty with the aboriginal inhabitants.

In this year he wrote an interesting letter to two women of high rank in Germany, one of whom was the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Frederick V., Prince Palatine of the Rhine and King of Bohemia, and granddaughter of James I. of England. The other was Anna Maria, Countess of Hornes, the friend and companion of Elizabeth. They were serious persons, and had some knowledge of Friends, having been previously visited by Robert Barclay and Benjamin Furly. In his letter, William Penn manifests a deep concern for their religious advancement, and sympathizes with them in the difficulties to which their station in society necessarily exposed them. He thus concludes his appeal: "Let not his (Christ's) vinegar and gall be unpleasant, nor his crown of thorns troublesome: last of all, let not his nails and spear be terrible to you. For they that will not forsake him in his agonies, but be the companions of his tribulations, and cheerfully lay down their life and die with him to the world; they, and none else shall rise with him in the newness of life, and ascend with him to his Father, by him to be glorified with that glory, which he had with his Father before the world began. Unto which kingdom, God Almighty conduct you, through this earthly pilgrimage. Amen."

In 1677 he paid another religious visit in Holland and Germany, of which he has left an instructive and particular account. He sailed from England in the fifth month, in company with George Fox, Robert Barclay, and some other Friends, and after a short passage, arrived safely at Rotterdam. Here they held a meeting, at which many of the principal inhabitants were present. In referring to

it, he says, "The gospel was preached, the dead [in trespasses and sins] were raised, and the living comforted." They then proceeded to Leyden and Harlaem, and from thence to Amsterdam, where they had a comfortable and refreshing meeting. At this place, William Penn wrote a letter to the King of Poland, on behalf of the Friends of Dantzie, who were then suffering bitter persecution on account of their religion. Robert Barclay, George Keith, Benjamin Furly, and William Penn, soon afterwards set forward towards Hersford, where the Princess Elizabeth held her court. They were received by her and the countess with great kindness, and held several meetings at the palace. Of the first, he says, "The Eternal Word showed itself like a hammer this day, yea, sharper than a two-edged sword, dividing asunder between the soul and the spirit, the joints and the marrow." "Well, let my right hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, when I shall forget the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the sure mercies of our God, to us his travelling servants, that day. O Lord, send forth thy light and thy truth, that all nations may behold thy glory." The next day they again visited the princess, when William Penn, animated by the constraining love of Christ, which knows no respect of persons, held a meeting among the servants of her household. He remarks, "The same blessed power that had appeared to visit them of high, appeared also to visit them of low degree, and we were all sweetly tendered and broken together, for virtue went forth of Jesus that day, and the life of our God was shed abroad amongst us as a sweet savour, for which their souls bowed before the Lord and confessed to our testimony."

At the request of the princess and countess he related the manner of his early convincement, and told them of the many trials and consolations through which the Lord had led him, on his way towards the kingdom of everlasting holiness and peace. They heard him with deep interest, and were much affected during the recital, and he expresses the hope and belief that the Lord had made it profitable to them.

The next day a public meeting was held, when many of the people of the town were present. Of this opportunity he says, "The word that never faileth them that

wait for it, and abide in it, opened the way and unsealed the book of life, yea, the quickening power and life of Jesus wrought and reached to them ; and virtue from him in whom dwelleth the Godhead bodily, went forth and blessedly distilled upon us his own heavenly life, sweeter than the spices with pure frankincense, yea, than the sweet-smelling myrrh that cometh from a far country. Blessed be the name of the Lord, and confided in be our God for ever !”

In this meeting the princess was deeply affected, and at its close, she took William Penn by the hand, and was about to speak of the sense she had of the power and presence of God that was amongst them, when her emotion stopped her. Turning to the window and placing her hand upon her breast, she exclaimed—“ I cannot speak to you—my heart is full.” After a time of silence, she recovered herself and said, “ Will you not come hither again ?” “ I told her,” William Penn says, “ we were in the hand of the Lord ; and being his, could not dispose of ourselves ; but the Lord had taken care that we should not forget her and those with her ; for he had raised and begotten an heavenly concernment in our souls for her and them, and we loved them all with that love wherewith God had loved us.”

In taking leave of the members of this interesting family, the witness for God in several of whose hearts had been reached and opened, he recommended to them “ holy silence from all will-worship, and the workings, strivings, and images of their own mind and spirit ; that the power of Jesus might be felt in their hearts, and his holy teachings witnessed and followed in the way of his blessed cross, which would crucify them unto the world, and the world unto them.”

The next morning, Robert Barclay returning to Amsterdam, William Penn and his companions pursued their journey to Frankfort. It was his practice to seek out the serious persons, in the various places through which he passed, with many of whom he had refreshing religious meetings.

At Frankfort he wrote a general epistle to Friends throughout the world, which is an earnest exhortation to faithfulness, and obedience to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. After referring to the mercy and loving-kindness of the Lord to them, he says, “ Therefore let us

continually watch and stand in awe that we grieve not his Holy Spirit, nor turn his grace into wantonness ; but let all of us wait in a holy travail of spirit, to know ourselves sealed by the spirit of adoption, unto the day of our complete redemption ; when not only all our sins, but all sorrows, sighings, and tears shall be wiped away from our eyes ; and everlasting songs of joy and thanksgivings shall melodiously fill our hearts to God, who sits upon the throne, and to his blessed immaculate Lamb, who by his most precious blood shall have completely redeemed us from the earth, and written our names in the book of life."

At Krisheim he wrote a letter to the Princess Elizabeth and the Countess of Hornes, in which he urges them to yield themselves unreservedly into the divine hand, and not shrink from trials. "Love," he says, "the fire ; start not aside, neither flinch from the scorching of it, for it will purify and refine you as gold seven times tried ; then cometh the stamp and seal of the Lord upon his own vessel, 'holiness' to him for ever ; which he never gave, nor will give to reprobate silver, the state of the religious worshippers of the world. And herein be comforted, that Zion shall be redeemed through judgment, and all her converts through righteousness ; and after the appointed time for mourning is over, the Lord will give 'beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.'"

From Manheim, he addressed the Prince Palatine of Heidelberg, acknowledging his wisdom in granting religious toleration in his dominions, and at the same time warning him to think of his latter end, and by the light of Christ in his conscience, examine how it was with his soul.

Having heard of a very serious young woman, the Countess of Falkenstein and Bruck, who lived at her father's castle, near Mulheim, William Penn and his companions wished to visit her. But this could not be easily accomplished, as she was strictly guarded, by direction of her father, the graef, who having no sympathy with her in religious feeling, was unwilling that she should receive any encouragement from others.

The graef met William Penn and his friends as they were entering the town, and being offended at them for not uncovering their heads in his presence, commanded

his soldiers to expel them from his territories. They were compelled that night to lodge in the open air. At Drysbury, William Penn says, "It came upon me with a sweet fervent power to visit the Countess of Falkenstein, with a salutation from the love and life of Jesus, and to open unto her more plainly the way of the Lord." It thus begins: "Jesus the immaculate Lamb of God, grieved and crucified by all the workers of iniquity, illuminate thy understanding, bless and be with thy spirit for ever! Though unknown, yet art thou much beloved, for the sake of thy desires and breathings after the living God." After encouraging her under her trials by the assurance, that from childhood he had himself been a seeker after the Lord, and a great sufferer for his cause, from parents, kindred, companions, and magistrates; he continues, "Know certainly, that which hath discovered unto thee the vanities of this world, the emptiness and the fading of all earthly glory, the blessedness of the righteous, and the joy of the world that is to come, is the light of Christ Jesus, where-with he hath enlightened thy soul; 'for in him was life, and that life is the light of men.'" Having given much excellent counsel, he concludes his letter by recommending her "to trust in the Lord for ever; and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God of the prophets, and of the apostles; the God of all the holy martyrs of Jesus, illuminate, fortify, and preserve thee steadfast, that in the end thou mayest receive the reward of life and eternal salvation: to whom be glory, and to the Lamb that sits upon the throne, one God and one Lord, blessed and magnified for ever and ever, Amen!"

This message of gospel love was shortly after acknowledged by the countess, who expressed much sorrow, that any who came in the love of God to visit her, should suffer as some had already suffered from the rage and cruelty of her father.

William Penn also wrote to the graef a letter, which concludes thus, "Repent, I exhort thee, and consider thy latter end, for thy days are not like to be many in this world; therefore mind the things that make for thy eternal peace, lest distress come upon thee as an armed man, and there be none to deliver thee!"

In his travels he met with many persons, variously circumstanced in life, whose hearts the Lord had evidently

touched, as with a live coal from his holy altar, and who in different degrees had given up to follow the leadings of his Holy Spirit. To all such the visit of William Penn was acceptable, while to many it was signally blessed. The limits of this tract will not admit of even a reference to many of the labours in which he was engaged, both personally and by letter. He was the means of spreading a more accurate knowledge of the principles he professed, which had been much misunderstood and misrepresented. Several of those whom he visited are known to have retained a lasting regard for him. The Princess Elizabeth corresponded with him, and continued to manifest till her death, which occurred in 1679, a sincere regard for religion, and love for its true messengers.

From this journey he returned in the latter part of summer, having been absent from home about three months.

Soon after, he published an epistle of tender counsel and advice "to all those who are sensible of their day of visitation," in which he says, "Let him (the Saviour) no longer lie as in the manger, nor at your doors, but rather give him your hearts, and let him reign over you as a king; for he has bought you with his own precious blood, and is therefore worthy that we should serve and honour him, and he reign over us. That *He* may be our king and lawgiver, who gave his own life for us that we should not perish but have everlasting life in him. He has laid down his life for you, and can you not lay down your sins for his sake; yea, for your own sakes? Consider that he descended from the glory of his Father to bring you to glory; and can you not depart from the withering glory of this world that you may inherit his glory which is everlasting?"

In 1678, '79, and '80, he was much engaged in applications for the relief of his persecuted brethren, and in defending the Society from the slanders of its enemies.

In 1681, Friends of Bristol were persecuted with great rigour, and nearly all the men and women crowded into noisome prisons; yet it is worthy of remark, that their religious meetings were still maintained by the children, who, undeterred by the sufferings of their parents, regularly assembled for divine worship. At this time, William Penn addressed them a letter, exhorting them to constancy amid their deep trials,

In the same year he obtained from King Charles II., a charter for the province of Pennsylvania. This, it is supposed, was granted to him in lieu of a sum of money which had been long due to his father. The motive which induced him to solicit it, was no doubt mainly to procure an asylum for his brethren in religious fellowship, who from the time of their being first gathered as a people, had been persecuted, wherever they appeared in Europe. But his philanthropy was not limited to them; for he intended to extend the benefits of the province to all who wished peaceably to enjoy civil and religious liberty. His design from the first, was to establish a government upon Christian principles, the charter obtained vesting in him considerable power for the formation of the laws. In referring to this subject, he says, " And because I have been somewhat exercised at times, about the nature and end of government among men, it is reasonable to expect that I should endeavour to establish a just and righteous one in this province, that others may take example by it—truly this my heart desires. For nations want a precedent, and till vice and corrupt manners be impartially rebuked and punished, and till virtue and sobriety be cherished, the wrath of God will hang over nations. I do therefore desire the Lord's wisdom to guide me, and those that may be concerned with me, that we may do the thing that is truly wise and just."

The name Pennsylvania was given to the province by the king, in honour of Admiral Penn, and against the expressed wish and remonstrance of the proprietor.

After he had prepared an account of the country assigned to him, and of the terms on which it was to be settled, he added the following advice to persons intending to emigrate. It exhibits a strong contrast to the selfish policy usually manifested by persons having a new country to settle, and shows the purity of his purpose in a conspicuous light.

" I wish my dear country-folks to consider seriously the premises; as well the inconveniency, as future ease and plenty; that so none may move rashly, or from a fickle, but from a solid mind; having, above all things, an eye to the providence of God, in the disposing of themselves; and would further advise all such, at least to have the permission, if not the good-liking of their near relations; for

that is both natural and a duty incumbent upon all. And by this will natural afflictions be preserved, and a friendly and profitable correspondence between them ; in all which I beseech Almighty God to direct us, that his blessing may attend our honest endeavours ; and then the consequence of all our undertakings will turn to the glory of his great name, and all true happiness to us and our posterity."

Although he had obtained a royal grant to Pennsylvania, he did not consider that this alone entitled him to possess it. He knew that the original proprietors of the soil had never forfeited their rights, and therefore, from the first, determined to purchase the land from its real owners, the Indians. Accordingly, with the first settlers, who sailed in 1681, he sent out commissioners, who were to treat with them for an honest transfer of their claims. By these commissioners, he sent a letter to the aborigines, acquainting them with his intentions, and of his desire to maintain a just, peaceable, and mutually advantageous intercourse with them. It commences thus : " There is a Great God and power that hath made the world and all things therein, to whom you, and I, and all people, owe their being and well being ; and to whom you and I must one day give an account for all that we do in the world. This Great God hath written his law in our hearts, by which we are taught and commanded to love and help, and do good to one another, and not to do harm and mischief one unto another. Now this Great God hath been pleased to make me concerned in your part of the world, and the king of the country where I live hath given me a great province therein ; but I desire to enjoy it with your love and consent, that we may always live together as neighbours and friends."

In his conditions with the settlers, he had some excellent provisions to guard against the gross frauds which had been so much practised upon the unsuspecting Indians by white traders. He stipulated that whatever was given to the natives in exchange for their furs, should be exposed to public view, and subjected to the proper test ; that goods of inferior quality should not be passed upon them under a deceptive character, and no injury or provocation be offered to them.

In 1682, William Penn embarked for America. During his preparations for the voyage, he experienced a deep

trial in the loss of his mother, who had often befriended him, when his father's displeasure had driven him from home. His constant desire, that all his movements might tend to the glory of God, is shown in the spirit which breathes through the following letter, written to Stephen Crisp, on the eve of his departure from England.

“ DEAR S. C.—My dear and lasting love in the Lord’s everlasting Truth reaches to thee, with whom is my fellowship in the gospel of peace, that is more dear and precious to my soul than all the treasures and pleasures of this world ; for when a few years are passed, we shall all go the way whence we shall never return : and that we may unweariedly serve the Lord in our day and place, and in the end enjoy a portion with the blessed that are at rest, is the breathing of my soul !

“ Stephen ! We know one another, and I need not say much to thee ; but this I will say, thy parting dwells with me, or rather thy love at my parting. How innocent, how tender, how like the little child that has no guile ! The Lord will bless that ground. I have also a letter from thee which comforted me ; for many are my trials, yet not more than my supplies from my Heavenly Father, whose glory I seek and the renown of his blessed name. And truly Stephen, there is work enough, and here is room to work in. Surely God will come in for a share in this planting work, and that leaven shall leaven the whole lump in time. I do not believe the Lord’s providence had run this way towards me, but that he has an heavenly end and service in it. So with him I leave all, and myself, and thee, and his dear people, and blessed name on earth.

“ God Almighty, immortal and eternal, be with us, that in the body and out of the body we may be his for ever !”

Amid his preparations for the voyage, he addressed to his wife and children, who were to be left behind, a letter fraught with the most earnest solicitude for their well-being every way, and full of the most tender and judicious counsel. It thus concludes : “ So, my God, that hath blessed me with his abundant mercies, both of this and the other and blessed life, be with you all, guide you by his counsel, bless you, and bring you to his eternal glory ! that you may shine, my dear children, in the firmament

of God's power, with the blessed spirits of the just, that celestial family, praising and admiring him, the God and Father of it, for ever. For there is no God like unto him ; the God of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of the prophets, the apostles, and martyrs of Jesus, in whom I live for ever.

“ So farewell to my thrice dearly beloved wife and children !

“ Yours, as God pleaseth, in that which no waters can quench, no time forget, nor distance wear away, but remains for ever.”

After a passage of about six weeks, during which time many of the ship's company died of small-pox, he landed at New-Castle, on the 24th of the 8th month. While this awful scourge prevailed on board, he was very usefully employed in ministering spiritual and outward comfort to the sick and dying.

From New-Castle William Penn proceeded up the Delaware to Chester, where an assembly was called and laws were passed well calculated to maintain civil and religious liberty, peace, and morality among the settlers. In the preamble to these, the origin and objects of civil government are clearly set forth.

Amid the cares of his government, he did not neglect his religious duties, but held meetings, both in New York and Maryland, “ in which he had good and eminent service for the Lord.”

It appears that there were at this time, persons who questioned the purity of William Penn's motives, in the great work he had undertaken, and intimated that ambition, and pecuniary gain, were his objects. But such knew little of his real character, or of the many and great sacrifices, both of reputation and estate, which he was continually making for the benefit of others. In replying to one of these, he says : “ Keep thy place : I am in mine, and have served the God of the whole earth since I have been in it.—Had I sought greatness, I had staid at home, where the difference between what I am here, and was offered, and could have been there in power and wealth, is as wide as the places are. No, I came for the Lord's sake, and therefore have I stood to this day, well, and diligent, and successful ; blessed be his power.”

In 1682, he held the celebrated treaty with the Indians, under a great elm tree, at Shackamaxon, now Kensington. It is much to be regretted that the records of this treaty have been lost, so that it is now doubtful whether a negotiation for the purchase of land, formed any part of it. It is however certain, from the few articles of it which have been preserved, that reciprocal tokens of peace and friendship were exchanged. The first article is to this effect: "And lastly, that both Christians and Indians should acquaint their children with this league, and firm chain of friendship made between them, and that it should always be made stronger and stronger, and be kept bright and clean, without rust or spot, between our children and children's children, while the creeks and rivers run, and while the sun, moon, and stars endure." Of this treaty it has been remarked, "that it was the only one not ratified by an oath, and that was never broken."

The friendship thus begun between William Penn and the Indians, was never interrupted, but continued reciprocally to increase; he went frequently among them, and spent a very large sum for their instruction and benefit. Nor were they deficient on their part; he and the early settlers receiving from them many valuable supplies, and other disinterested acts of kindness. They had no reason to complain of Indian treachery or outrage; nor, it may be inferred, would so much have marked the settlement of other colonies, but for the acts of white aggressors. If there had been no Indian wrongs, the world would have heard little of Indian outrages.

The native inhabitants uniformly called William Penn, Onas; and it is worthy of remark, that the friendship thus begun has been continued uninterruptedly with his successors in religious profession to the present day. The peeled and scattered remnants of once powerful tribes, amid the calamities in which they are now involved, and the dangers that threaten them, still look to the Society of Friends for counsel and protection.

The experiment of William Penn in founding a government in the wilderness, in regulating its affairs, and maintaining its relations with the Indians and other neighbours, on Christian and pacific principles, proved entirely successful; for so long as these principles were adhered to by his successors, Pennsylvania continued rapidly to

increase in all that is desirable in a country, proving that it is righteousness that exalteth a nation.

During the year 1683, William Penn was much engaged with the affairs of his province; the preceding year he had laid out the City of Philadelphia, upon the site of which many houses had been erected.

In the following year he returned to England, where a hot persecution was raging. It appears that his principal inducement was the hope of being useful to his suffering brethren, he having great influence with the crown-prince, afterwards James II., who had been the particular friend of his father.

He had provided for the affairs of the province during his absence; but such was his unceasing solicitude for the spiritual welfare of the Friends he was about leaving, that after he had embarked, he addressed them a letter from the ship, in which he says: "Now you are come to a quiet land, provoke not the Lord to trouble it; and as liberty and authority are with you, and in your hands, let the government be upon his shoulders, in all your spirits; that you may rule for him, under whom the princes of this world will one day esteem it their honour to govern and serve in their places. I cannot but say, when these things come mightily upon my mind, as the apostle did of old, 'what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness.'

"And thou, Philadelphia, the virgin settlement of this province, named before thou wert born, what love, what care, what service, and what travail has there been, to bring thee forth and preserve thee from such as would abuse and defile thee!

"Oh that thou mayst be kept from the evil that would overwhelm thee; that faithful to the God of thy mercies, in the life of righteousness, thou mayst be preserved to the end. My soul prays to God for thee, that thou mayst stand in the day of trial, that thy children may be blessed of the Lord, and thy people saved by his power."

After his return to England he was actively engaged on behalf of his suffering Friends, many of whom were lying in prison, and enduring cruel treatment of various kinds. He had been there but a short time when James ascended the throne. Having, in consequence of the king's friendship, great influence at court, his house and gates were

thronged with clients and suppliants, sometimes to the number of two hundred in a day, desiring him to present their addresses to the king. He did not become impatient with their importunity, but treated them with the utmost kindness, and rendered his services with promptitude and cheerfulness. Instead of seeking emolument from these incessant labours, he often defrayed out of his own funds the expense, unavoidably attendant upon the preparation of the documents which passed through his hands. Nor were his good offices confined to the members of his own religious society; others freely partook of his bounty and kindness.

He also, about this time, wrote a work designed to advance the cause of religious liberty, entitled "A Persuasive to Moderation." The king soon after issued a proclamation, by which more than twelve hundred Friends, beside other professors, were restored to their families; an event, undoubtedly greatly promoted by the exertions of William Penn.

In 1686 he paid another religious visit to the continent of Europe, respecting which but few particulars have been preserved. After his return he visited many of the meetings of Friends in his own land, to their satisfaction and the peace of his own mind. In the summer of 1687, he was again engaged in the work of the ministry, and had several meetings at Bristol. To these the people flocked in great numbers. At Chew, five miles distant, he had a heavenly meeting, which was held in the open air, as no building could be found large enough for the purpose. From this great openness of the people, it seems probable, that the patient sufferings of Friends, and the faithfulness of their children, had produced a favourable impression in that neighbourhood. While engaged in this visit, the king, who was at the time on a journey, attended several of his meetings.

In 1688, King James, whose Roman Catholic faith and arbitrary acts, had given great offence to the nation, was driven from the British throne, and William and Mary brought in.

William Penn, whose intimacy and influence with the late king were well known, was now accused of being in league with him, and of covertly professing the same faith. He was, in consequence, soon afterwards arrested and

examined before the lords in council; but as nothing could be proved against him, he was discharged. With characteristic frankness and magnanimity, he declared on his examination, " that he had done nothing but what he could answer before God, and all the princes of the world; that he loved his country and the protestant religion above his life, and had never acted against either; that all he ever aimed at in his public endeavours, was no other than what the prince had declared for; that King James was always his friend and his father's friend, and in gratitude he was the king's friend, and did always as much as in him lay influence him to his true interest."

Soon afterward, the toleration act was passed, which afforded great relief to Friends, particularly in preventing their meetings from being disturbed. It embodied principles of justice, which William Penn had long laboured to induce the government to recognise.

Whilst making preparations to return to Pennsylvania, where his presence was much needed, he was again arrested on a charge of holding treasonable correspondence with the exiled monarch, with a view to his restoration. At his own request, he was taken before King William, when an intercepted letter from *James to him*, was exhibited; but as William Penn had never seen it, and had done nothing to further the designs of the dethroned king, he was in a short time honourably released.

He now renewed his preparations for the voyage, but was soon for the third time arrested. The country was in great commotion on account of the threatened invasion of the French, and in the absence of the king, the queen had hastily issued a warrant to apprehend many suspected persons, among whom was William Penn. When brought from prison before the court of king's bench, nothing could be proved against him, and he was again discharged. He was then nearly ready for his departure, and a number of colonists were preparing to embark with him, when, a conspiracy against the government having been discovered, he was accused of being an actor in it, on the oath of one Fuller, who was afterwards legally convicted of being an impostor, and sentenced to the pillory. A warrant was issued for his apprehension, and though not imprisoned, he was unwilling to leave the country while an accusation was pending against him. He lived privately

in London, for about three years, during which time it does not appear that he was ever sought for, or brought to trial.

It may well excite astonishment that William Penn, whose life had been devoted to the spiritual and temporal good of his fellow-men, should thus have been continually harassed by false and malicious accusations. But in the turbulent times in which he lived, a slight circumstance would suffice to bring the purest character under suspicion. Again and again he was accused of being a Papist ; it was even said he had been bred at St. Omer's and had received a priest's orders from Rome. His enemies persisted, for a time, in these absurd and malicious charges, notwithstanding he had published "A Caveat against Popery," and the religion he professed, and for which he had deeply suffered, stood opposed to a worship of human pomp and "carnal ordinances," and held up the simplicity of the gospel requisition, "That the true worshipper must worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

His former intercourse with King James, doubtless gave rise to these accusations ; although it had ceased with the period of his acknowledged sovereignty, and had for its principal object the promotion of religious liberty, and the redress of grievances among his fellow-subjects.

Under all his trials, however, William Penn looked to the only true source of consolation, and his Divine Master sustained and comforted him amid all his afflictions. He thus writes to a friend in Pennsylvania : "Under and over it all, the ancient Rock has been my shelter and comfort ; and I hope yet to see your faces with our ancient satisfaction. The Lord grant, if it be for his glory, whose I desire to be in all conditions ; for this world passeth away, and the form and beauty of it fadeth ; but there are eternal habitations for the faithful ; among whom I pray that my lot may be, rather than among the princes of the earth."

About this period, George Fox was removed from works to rewards. In his illness he sent for William Penn, who was with him at his close, bore a noble testimony at his funeral, and afterward wrote a preface to his journal. This is an excellent treatise, and has been printed by itself, as "The Rise and Progress of the People called Quakers."

After he had been about three years in retirement, John Locke and other eminent men, went in a body to the king

and solicited his restoration to society, which was granted; but William Penn was not satisfied with this kind of discharge. He solicited permission to plead his own innocence before the king and council, which being allowed, he was honourably acquitted. Before this, the representations of some envious persons had induced the king to deprive him of the government of his province. It was, however, soon restored to him.

In about a month after his enlargement, he met with a severe affliction in the death of his wife, a woman of excellent and cultivated understanding, and to whom the Lord had given the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. This event still further delayed his return to America.

In 1695, he paid a religious visit to some of the western counties of England, in which he had good service for the Lord. At Wells, he was interrupted while speaking and taken before the mayor, who, being convinced of the unlawfulness of the arrest, immediately set him at liberty.

In 1696, Friends were excused by law from taking oaths;—an enactment first made as an experiment, but which proving a successful one, it was afterwards made perpetual. To promote this object William Penn had long laboured, both orally and through the press, and had addressed a letter to the House of Commons on the subject. In this year he married Hannah Callowhill of Bristol, a sober, religious woman, who survived him several years. Soon after this event he sustained an afflicting bereavement in the decease of his eldest son, a pious and amiable young man, of whose illness and death he published an interesting narrative.

About this time, in company with some other Friends, he paid a visit to Peter the Great, who was then living privately in England, for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the arts of the country. They explained the principles of the society to the czar, and gave him some of their books; and after this interview, William Penn addressed the following letter to him: “It was a profound respect, and not a vain curiosity, Great Czar, which brought me twice to wait upon thee. My desire is, that as Almighty God has distinguished thee above so many millions of thy fellow-creatures, so thou mayest distinguish thyself above them, by an extraordinary zeal for piety and charity, which are the two legs the Christian Religion stands upon;

and where they are wanting or defective, it must needs fall to the streets, to the scorn and triumph of the heathen. May thy example show thee to be as good as great, that thou mayest bear His image, by whom kings reign and princes decree justice. Without goodness, power itself can never do. If thou wouldest rule well, thou must rule for God, and to do that thou must *be ruled* by Him, who has given to kings his grace to command themselves and their subjects, and to the people, the grace to obey God and their kings. Know Great Czar, and take it with thee, as one part of the collection of knowledge thou art making in this unexampled travel, that 'tis in England that God has visited and touched the hearts of a people, above forty years ago, by the holy light and grace of his Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, by which their minds have been turned from false worship and evil living, to worship God, who is a spirit, in and by his own spirit, to be led by it in their conversation, that they may bring forth the fruits of it among men, to His praise who has called them. They are an inward and retired people, who dare not conform themselves to vain inventions and fashions of the world, either in religion or civil conversation; but live and act as believing that God seeth them in all they do, and will judge them according to what they do. They teach that men must be holy or they cannot be happy; that they should use few words, be peaceable in life, suffer wrongs, love enemies, deny themselves, without which, Faith is false, Worship formality, and Religion hypocrisy; yet they are an industrious people, in their generation, and though against superfluity, yet lovers of ingenuity. It was in their name five of us came to salute thee, who wish thou mayest have an eye to this Divine Principle of Light and Life in the soul, a measure of which is given to thee and to all men to profit with, that by it, Piety, Wisdom, and Charity may dwell with thee, and that thou mayest be qualified to serve Almighty God, suitable to the great opportunities he has put into thy hands."

During his residence at Deptford, the emperor several times attended the meetings of Friends, and once also in London. Slight as was his acquaintance with the society, he did not soon forget it; for sixteen years afterwards, being at Frederickstadt in Holstein, with his army, he inquired whether there were any Quakers there, and being

informed that there were a few, he expressed a wish to attend their meeting. Being then told that his soldiers occupied the meeting-house, he had them immediately removed. When the meeting was held, Peter attended, with Prince Menzikoff, and a number of his followers. He sat very gravely during a time of silence, and when a Friend rose to speak, the czar, understanding the language, interpreted the discourse in a very serious manner to his officers, saying "that whoever lived according to that doctrine would be happy."

Having been detained from his province for about fifteen years, in 1699, William Penn embarked for America. On this occasion he took his family with him, designing to make Pennsylvania his future residence. Before leaving England, he drew up a paper of advice for his children, in which he gives them short but comprehensive directions for the regulation of their conduct. The ship was about three months at sea. This delay seems to have been providential, as during that period the yellow fever was very fatal in the province, and had nearly ceased at the time of her arrival.

All parties in the colony hailed William Penn's arrival with delight. There had been some dissension in his absence, and it was believed his return would heal and remedy the differences.

In 1700, he introduced into the meeting of Friends, a religious concern he felt on behalf of the Indians and the negroes, some of the latter class having been introduced into the province. He exhorted Friends to discharge their duty towards these people, more particularly in regard to the improvement of their minds, recommending that they should enjoy the privilege of attending religious meetings, and of receiving Christian instruction.

Previous to this, (in 1688,) the Friends from Crisheim, in Germany, who had settled in the neighbourhood of Germantown, made a representation to the yearly meeting, of their belief that the buying, selling, and holding men in slavery, was inconsistent with the Christian religion." The concern of Friends for their welfare continued to gain ground, until they made a rule of discipline, by which no member of their communion is allowed to buy, sell, or hold slaves.

Bills were introduced by William Penn into the assembly, for regulating the morals and marriages of the negroes,

and to provide for their having just trials when accused of crimes ; also, to prevent abuses upon the Indians.

About this time, Friends of Philadelphia established a public school ; the following is the preamble to its charter obtained from William Penn: " Whereas, the prosperity of any people, depends in great measure upon the good education of youth, and their early instruction in the principles of true religion and virtue, and qualifying them to serve their country and themselves by breeding them in reading, writing, learning of languages and useful arts and sciences, suitable to their sex, age, and degree, which cannot be effected in any manner so well as by erecting public schools for the purposes aforesaid."

A circumstance now occurred, which separated William Penn from his American possessions for ever. A bill had been introduced into Parliament, for changing the colonial into regal governments. This measure, if adopted, would take the control of the colony out of his hands, and substitute military rule for the mild and pacific government he had established. From a sense of duty, although very reluctantly, he yielded to the request of his friends in England that he would immediately return thither.

The news of his intended departure was received by the inhabitants with feelings of deep regret. Perhaps none felt it more than the Aboriginal inhabitants. On this occasion, a number of them waited upon him at his residence at Pennsbury. The interview was conducted with great gravity. One of the chiefs, in the course of his remarks, said, " that they never first broke their covenants with any people ;" striking his hand upon his head, he said " they did not make them *there*, but"—placing it upon his breast—" they made them *there*."

William Penn sailed for England, in the eighth month, 1701, having been in the province about two years. On the eve of his departure, he presented Philadelphia with a charter, constituting it a city.

The bill to change the form of the colonial government was never passed into a law ; but other services prevented his return to Pennsylvania. In 1705, in a brief, but forcible epistle to Friends, he exhorts them to hold all their meetings in that which set them up, the heavenly power of God. In 1706, he removed with his family to Brentford, about eight miles from London. In 1707, he was unhappily in-

volved in some pecuniary difficulties, which arose in part from the dishonesty of his agent. It may be also observed, that his province, so far from being a source of emolument, had contributed greatly to reduce his once ample patrimony. These difficulties were afterwards satisfactorily adjusted. In 1709, he went forth on a gospel mission through the western parts of England, which was his last journey of this kind. In 1710, he removed to Rushcomb, in Buckinghamshire, where he continued to reside until his death. In 1712, he had three attacks of apoplexy. By these his mental powers were so weakened, that he was rendered incapable of transacting business. In this situation he remained for several years, without much bodily suffering, and appeared to enjoy great quietness, and sweetness of mind. In the latter part of 1714, he was visited by Thomas Story, who says of him, “ that he had a clear sense of truth, was plain, by some very clear sentences he spoke in the life and power of Truth, in an evening meeting we had there ; wherein we were greatly comforted, so that I am ready to think this was a sort of sequestration of him from all the concerns of this life, which so much oppressed him ; not in judgment but in mercy, that he might not be oppressed thereby to the end.”

When visited by two of his friends in 1716, he still expressed himself sensibly, and at parting thus addressed them : “ My love is with you ; the Lord preserve you, and remember me in the everlasting covenant !”

He continued gradually to grow weaker until the 30th of the 5th month, 1718, when his divine Master was pleased to summon him from the tribulations of time to the eternal rewards of the righteous.

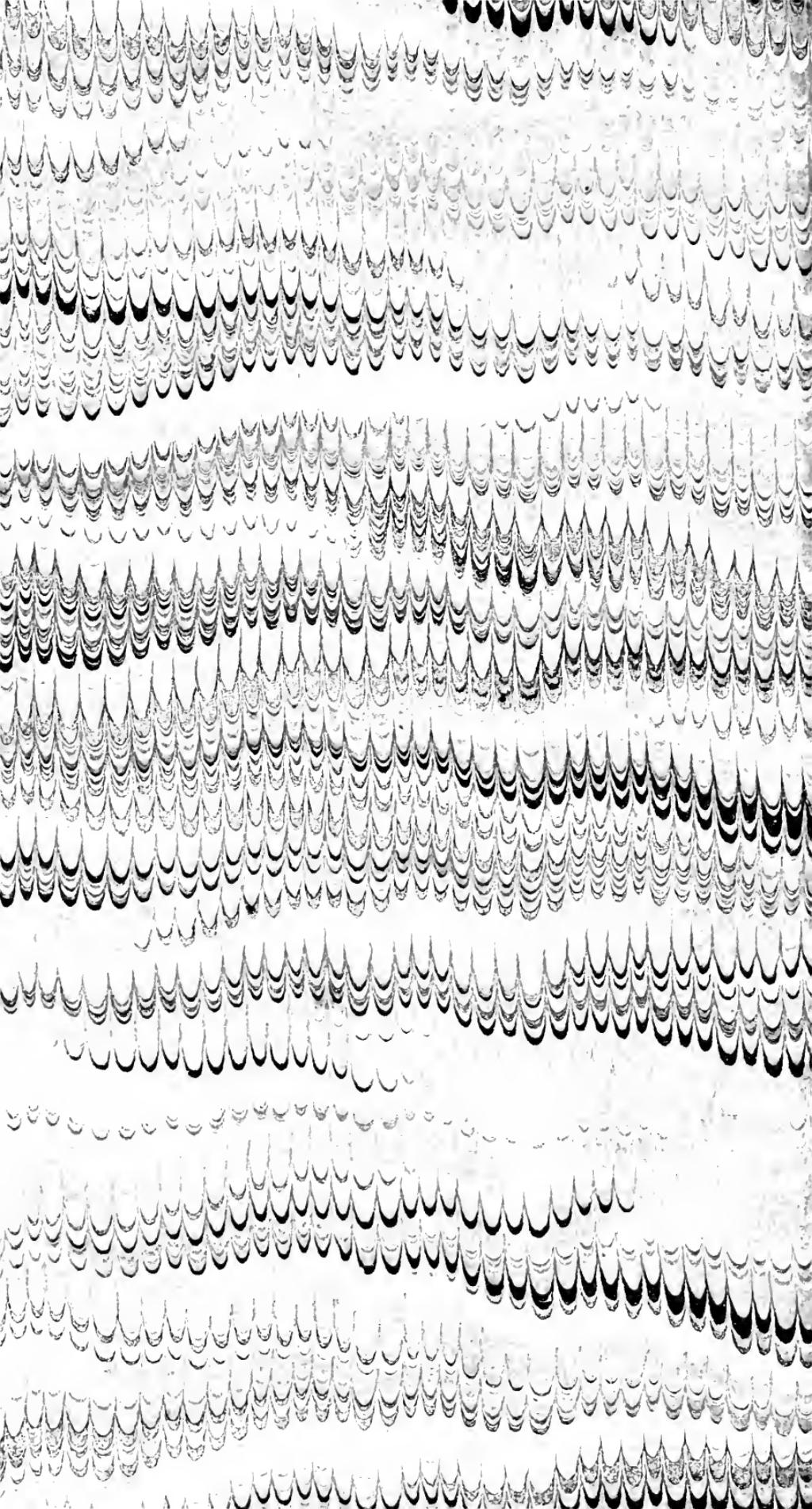
Thus peacefully passed away one of the most useful men of the age in which he lived : indeed history makes us acquainted with few so faithfully and fearlessly devoted to the cause of justice, and to the increase of righteousness in the earth. In early life he felt the tendering visitations of the Holy Spirit ; and as he submitted thereto, was led in paths of great circumspection and non-conformity to the world, and soon became an object of scorn, reproach, and even bitter persecution. But none of these things moved him, neither did he count his life dear, being mainly desirous that he might bear a faithful testimony to the truth whilst on earth, and finish his course with joy.

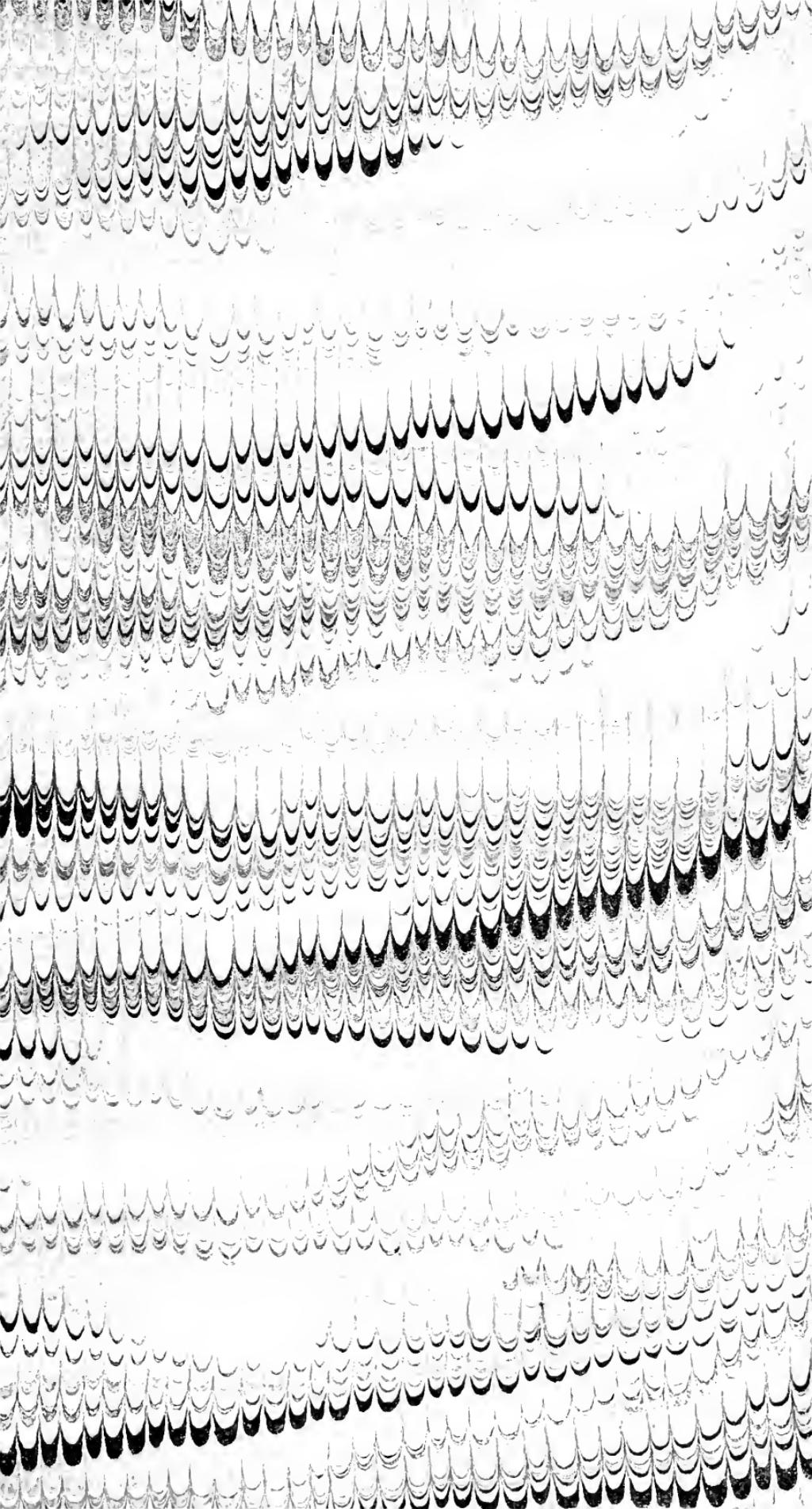
Early called to the “ ministry of reconciliation,” and

wisely instructed in the school of Christ, he was enabled, for the good of others, to bring forth out of the treasury things new and old.

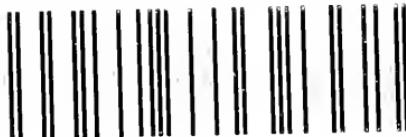
As an author his many publications are characterized by the forcible manner in which they set forth the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and the necessity of obedience to the teachings of the Holy Spirit. His views of morality and civil government were the fruit of Christian principle, and therefore adapted to all times and all conditions of men. He shows that oaths, whether judicial or profane, are contrary, not only to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and the practice of the primitive Christians, but are in their direct tendency and effects, injurious to morality. He establishes conclusively, that liberty, civil and religious, is the right of all, so far as its exercise does not infringe the rights of others; and he was consequently opposed to all persecution to enforce conformity in religious opinion. In short, he began a new era in civil government, and the sound and liberal views he promulgated, have produced, and are still working beneficial results to mankind. In founding his colony of Pennsylvania, he was influenced by the spirit of the gospel and a desire that its government might be supported without the violation of any Christian precept. His policy grew out of his religion, which breathed "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men;" and the aboriginal inhabitants, by others deemed treacherous and cruel, became the kind friends and faithful allies of his colonists. His pacific principles were found in their operation more effectual than munitions of war, to preserve the state in peace and prosperity.

In bringing this brief memoir to a close, we are sensible that our narrow limits are insufficient to do justice to the character of William Penn: to testify of his uprightness, his firmness, his zeal, his diligence, his Christian courtesy, his love of the truth. Whether we consider him as a religious writer, a wise and Christian legislator, or as a faithful and devoted minister of the gospel, we must regard him as a benefactor to mankind. Of such the everlasting reward is sure: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars, for ever and ever."





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